The cookbook, the *De Re Coquinaria (or On the Art of Cooking),* was written around the late 4th or early 5th century A.D. Here is a list of some of Mr. LaFleche’s favorite dishes from Apicius’ *De Re Coquinaria (On the Art of Cooking).*

1. **Brain Sausage**
2. **Boiled Goose in cold Apician sauce**
3. **Boiled Ostrich**
4. **Crane with Turnips**
5. **Flamingo in sauce**
6. **Parrot in sauce**
7. **Stuffed mouse**
8. **Spiced Rabbit**
9. **Sprinkled Rabbit**
10. **Sheep lung in milk and eggs**
11. **Sheep liver in honey and milk**

Many of the dishes in the cookbook use a huge variety of vegetables, exotic animals, expensive spices, and laborious recipes.



**In contrast, there is the Roman grain dole:**

* In the Roman Empire, by the 3th or 4th century A.D., there were likely 500,000 people living in Rome.
* It is estimated that the city of Rome along imported nearly 3,000,000 kilograms of grain a year.
* Rome gave away free grain to the very poor in the city; if you qualified, you could receive 400 kilograms of grain per year. This grain comes in the form of bread and other starches.
* If shipping from Sicily, North Africa, or the Baltic Sea was interrupted by war, storms, or pirates, then there would be no grain for days or weeks.
* Anywhere from 15-30% of the population of Rome received free grain.

**Now, some statistics from the United States:**

* The SNAP program, which is food stamps for the poor and homeless, is the system that the United States uses to help people and families pay for groceries when they earn less than a certain amount (below the poverty line).
* The amount of money a person earns from food stamps is $133.42 a month, or $33.35 a week.
* The United States has 47 million people on food stamps, or about 17% of the population, including children.

**Questions to consider:**

1. What does the discrepancy between Apicius’ cookbook, and the grain dole, say about Roman culture and Roman social classes?

2. What is the relationship between the grain dole for Rome and food stamps for the U.S.?

3. Is there anything that tells us about our own culture when we see the similarities between the Roman grain dole, and the U.S. food stamps?